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Letter from Robert Patterson to his mother Julia dated May 11, 1864

Robert Patterson

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Camp in Snake Creek Gap Ga

May 11th 1864

Dear Mother,

I have an opportunity of sending a letter to Chattanooga today and as I may not have a chance to mail anything for some time I thought I would accept this one.

We arrived at our Division Headquarters on Sunday evening and next morning were pushed out to the front but had no fighting of any consequence although there was considerable going on, on all sides of us. At twelve o'clock at night we were aroused up and marched twelve miles to this place where we are watching the movements of the Reds.

Hooker's Corps is in the Centre Howard on the left with the 4th Corps Palmer with the 14th between Hooker

I Howard and McPherson on the
left with the 15th and 16th corps try-
ing to cut off the Rail Road at
Resacca. I hear this morning he
has succeeded. If so, the Kets are
in a bad fix. We have about 150,000
men to their 60,000, but if we
have to fight them on their prop-
erty the advantages are about equal.

The distant Thunder of Artillery
tells in unmistakable language
that our comrades on both sides
are engaged.

This part of Georgia is very mountainous,
extremely well adapted for defense, and
if Genl Sherman succeeds in getting the
enemy either out of his fortifications or
whips him in them, he will do wonders.

I wrote to Stone about my
Valise, and at the same time I
wrote to a Lieut in our Regt to go
to the Express Office and bring it out
with him, but he may have left

Cincinnati before my letter reached
them. If that is the case I can see
no think of any other way than for
them to send for it to Cincinnati &
keep it till we get settled somewhere.

I would send the money to pay
expenses but am afraid to trust
it to the mails.

He may be on this campaign
for sometime for if the money
succeeds in getting away we will have
to follow him to Atlanta a hundred
miles from here, which will be awful
as this climate is very warm even
now. We have suffered from the
heat so much as I never did at home
in July or August and the roads
are six inches deep in dust. The
water also is very bad. I cannot see
how we will be able to live here
in the summer months at all.

I cannot tell you how much I
regret at being unable to go home before

We left. We had our idea of leaving camp before Monday and I was very busy making out Rolls when the order came.

Our Brig Gen who by the way has since been sent to a Sanatic Asylum at Philadelphia, telegraphed for us to be sent out immediately, and I suppose the authorities at Columbia thought there was something urgent and sent us out in a hurry.

I have not heard of Will since I came down. He is in the life somewhere about twenty miles from here.

I saw James Reynolds at Chattanooga. The Col joined us on Sunday. He was put in command of a Brigade of Militia but would not keep it. He will take command of our Brig in a day or two.

He brought out several commissions, one for me as Capt among the rest and the next morning we were all mustered in.

I must close this, as the man is ready to start. Remember me to all.

Yours affectionately
Ralph Patterson

Capt of 3rd Brig 1st Div
20th Corps

Army of the Cumberland